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17 March 1964

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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Chile: An impressive victory scored by the Communist-Socialist Popular Action Front (FRAP) in a hotly contested congressional by-election last Sunday probably will improve FRAP's prospects in next September's presidential election.

The election took place in Curico Province which, in the past, has voted strongly in favor of the parties that make up the center-right Democratic Front (FD). Sunday's returns, however, gave FRAP nearly 40 percent of the vote, compared to the 23 percent it polled in 1961.

The FD's vote, in contrast, dropped from 56 percent to 33 percent. The increasingly popular Christian Democratic Party (PDC) came in third with 27 percent of the vote, a substantial improvement over its 1961 showing.

The FRAP victory was partially due to the personal popularity of its candidate, a highly regarded physician running for a seat vacated by the death of his father. Despite its local character, however, the Curico election took on the complexion of a national plebescite. All parties spent freely and brought in their national leaders who campaigned vigorously.

*In the face of FRAP's upset victory, FD presidential nominee Durán withdrew from the race late yesterday, placing the FD leadership in a quandry over naming another candidate with less than six months remaining until the election. His resignation may therefore not be accepted. Conservative Party chairman Bulnes, however, reportedly has said that the FD would break up if FRAP won in Curico. Bulnes predicted that the Conservative and Liberal parties would support PDC's Eduardo Frei, but admitted that the majority of Chile's largest party, the Radicals, would probably turn to FRAP's Salvador Allende.

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A polarization on this basis between Frei and Allende would on balance enhance FRAP's chances and pose a grave threat of Communist domination of the next Chilean government.

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DAILY BRIEF

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NOTES

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*Libya: The Libyan Chamber of Deputies has unanimously adopted a resolution calling on the government to terminate the US and UK military base agreements, to end the treaty of alliance with Britain, and to achieve full evacuation of the bases through negotiation. The resolution adds that if negotiations fail to obtain these ends, the chamber will pass laws abrogating the treaty and agreements. Although King Idris and Premier Muntassir have both indicated that they did not fully sympathize with parliament on this issue, unanimous passage of the resolution by the chamber would appear to indicate at least government acquiescence in the resolution.

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DAILY BRIEF

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